United Nations E/2004/NGO/11

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
27 April 2004

Original: English

Substantive session of 2004
New York, 28 June-23 July 2004
Item 2 of the provisional agenda*
Resources mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

Statement submitted by the Institute of International Social Development, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* * *

* E/2004/100.

04-32638 (E) 070604

INSTITUTE'S OPINION ON THE POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMS THAT COULD BE CARRIED OUT IN THE LDCs

As the least developed countries are mostly overpopulated and access to resources by the people at large is not equitable, the best solution for enhancing Poverty Alleviation would be to encourage Self-Employment schemes so that skill-based support is available to the suffering population in terms of financial and non-financial support and an infrastructure is provided for the people to free Primary Healthcare and at least free functional literacy, if not Secondary, education both for adults and children.

This integrated approach would save the LDCs from the destiny of disaster and would save the world from being a silent witness to such destruction and make a mockery of the of the tall claims of scientific advancement and a progressive society.

As per the experience of the Institute, it is quite positive that if Self-Help Groups are encouraged like in Bangladesh, not only would the people learn to earn their livelihood and become less dependent on external benevolence, but would also benefit the world population with affordable services and products due to the low-cost production cost with negligible overhead.

Our Approach For Forming SELF-HELP GROUPS in the underprivileged sectors.

1) Conduct a Baseline Survey, which would reflect the demographic configuration, local skills, local natural resources, local health hazards and local literacy level.
2) Based on the findings a systematic strategic planning should be made to address the local education and health problems.
3) Taking the local skills, which could utilize the natural resources available locally into consideration, training could be conducted to teams of people of the same type of skills or complementary skills on marketing their acumen by way of services or products.
4) Soft loans could be released to these teams as they would have fiduciary responsibility collectively and chances of non-return of loan amount is near to nil as per our experience, specially with women participation in the teams. These teams would henceforth function as Self-Help Groups and would be totally responsible for all financial and non-financial transactions that they collectively would undertake for enhancing business.
5) To avoid middleman exploitation, the local authorities should deploy Non-Profit Organizations to pursue the Market for these Self-Help Groups, monitor their administrative documentation and supervise on any leakage in the system so as to avoid the termination of the economic progress.
6) Finally, the local authorities need to get an annual feedback of the income variance of the members of the Self-Help Groups to assess the financial progress and the improvement in the purchasing power of these people.
7) The trades, which are usually having quick returns, are products, which are Agro-based items of utility, assembling jobs, handicrafts and handloom items. Services, which as per experience, appear to be rewarding are: Food business, beauty parlor, tailoring, construction jobs, transportation, etc.
8) With the simultaneous support in the Health and Education Sector these LDCs would take not more than a decade to update themselves to be at par with the other more developed Nations .The world would be fortunate to restore some ancient heritage cultures from disappearance and thus become more enriched.